

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5950

INFO COMICEDEFOR

CINCLANT

CNO WASHDC

SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS PFOR IC UK NATO

SUBJECT: ICELAND-UK FISHERIES DISPUTE: PRESS TREATMENT OF
SPECIAL NAC MEETING

1. COVERAGE OF JANUARY 12 SPECIAL NATO COUNCIL MEETING IN THIS
MORNING'S LOCAL PRESS VARIED--PREDICTABLE--WITH RESPECTIVE
PAPERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD NATO AND FISHERIES DISPUTE. NET IMPACT
OF MEDIA HANDLING OF THIS AND OTHER ASPECTS OF GOI'S CURRENT
"RESTRAINED" POLICY COULD BE INSTRUMENTAL IN DETERMINING VIABILITY
OF GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH.

2. INDEPENDENCE PARTY'S MORGUNBLADID, WHICH STRONGLY SUPPORTS BOTH
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NATO AND GOI APPROACH TO FISHERIES DISPUTE, OFFERED LENGTHY ACCOUNT
OF NATO MEETING AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS UNDER FOUR-COLUMN FRONT

PAGE HEADLINE. BASING ARTICLE ON WIRE SERVICES AND INTERVIEW WITH ICELANDIC NATO AMBASSADOR TOMASSON, MORGUNBLADID GAVE DETAILED ACCOUNT OF TOMASSON'S PRESENTATION. PAPER DESCRIBED GOI REP'S REPORTED STRESS ON DAMAGE THAT DISPUTE IS CAUSING NATO AS WHOLE AND HIS WARNING THAT ICELAND WOULD REVIEW PARTICIPATION IN ALLIANCE IF UK DOES NOT REMOVE WARSHIPS FROM ICELAND'S CLAIMED 200-MILE FISHERIES JURISDICTION. TOMASSON TOLD MORGUNBLADID THAT IT WAS OBVIOUS AT MEETING THAT MOST MEMBER STATES FELT SOLUTION TO CONFLICT WAS OUT OF QUESTION AS LONG AS UK FRIGATES WERE INSIDE 200-MILE ZONE. "ON OTHER HAND," TOMASSON WAS QUOTED AS SAYING, "THIS IS AN ALLIANCE, AND NO ONE MEMBER CAN TELL ANOTHER WHAT TO DO. BUT IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT WE ENJOY CONSIDERABLE UNDERSTANDING." MORGUNBLADID NOTED THAT TOMASSON HAD REPORTEDLY BEEN ASKED BY AP WHETHER AMBASSADOR BRUCE HAD COMMENTED ON POSSIBILITY OF ICELAND'S WITHDRAWAL FROM NATO. TOMASSON WAS CITED AS SAYING THAT BRUCE WAS ONE OF MANY DELEGATES WHO SPOKE AT LENGTH ON MATTER AND THAT U.S. REPRESENTATIVE HAD EXPRESSED SERIOUS U.S. CONCERN AND HAD OUTLINED IN BROAD TERMS POSSIBILITIES OF SETTLEMENT, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ROLE OF SYG LUNS. (REUTERS DISPATCH FROM WASHINGTON WAS ALSO INCLUDED IN ARTICLE, SAYING THAT STATE DEPT SPOKESMAN YESTERDAY HAD EXPRESSED USG CONCERN OVER DISPUTE AND HOPES FOR QUICK SOLUTION. SPOKESMAN WAS REPORTED AS ADDING THAT U.S. HAD NOT BEEN ASKED TO MEDIATE.) MORGUNBLADID SAID THAT U.K. AMB KILLICK HAD TOLD PRESS AFTER NAC SESSION THAT WITHDRAWAL OF FRIGATES WAS IMPOSSIBLE IN ABSENCE OF RECIPROCAL ICELANDIC MOVE, I.E., PROMISE NOT TO INTERFERE WITH TRAWLERS. KILLICK WAS ALSO CITED AS STRESSING IMPORTANCE TO ICELAND'S DEFENSE INTERESTS OF CONTINUED NATO MEMBERSHIP. PAPER ALSO CARRIED TEXT OF COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AFTER MEETING.

2. COALITION PARTNER PROGRESSIVE PARTY'S TIMINN, WHICH SUPPORTS GOI APPROACH, THOUGH UNENTHUSIASTICALLY, DEVOTED QUARTER OF PAGE THREE TO NATO DEVELOPMENTS. ARTICLE OUTLINED TOMASSON'S PRESENTATION, NOTING EMPHASIS ON GOI DEMAND THAT UK PULL OUT WARSHIPS AND HIS WARNING THAT CONTINUED PRESENCE OF FRIGATES COULD INFLUENCE ICELAND'S PARTICIPATION IN NATO. TIMINN SAID THAT KILLICK HAD NOTHING NEW TO OFFER IN HIS PRESENTATION. TOMASSON WAS CITED AS SAYING THAT OTHER DELEGATES GENERALLY EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER DISPUTE AND THAT ICELAND ENJOYED UNDERSTANDING AND

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SUPPORT OF MANY IF NOT MOST OTHER MEMBERS. COMMUNIQUE WAS BRIEFLY OUTLINED. NO (RPT NO) SPECIFIC MENTION WAS MADE OF U.S. POSITION OR THAT OF ANY OTHER INDIVIDUAL MEMBER.

3. COMMUNIST-DOMINATED PEOPLES ALLIANCE DAILY THJODVILJINN COMBINED SHORT FRONT PAGE ACCOUNT OF NAC SESSION WITH REPORT OF LUNS' SCHEDULED ARRIVAL IN REYKJAVIK TOMORROW. PAPER SAID TOMASSON HAD EXPLAINED GOI'S POSITION, AND THAT OPINION OF MANY MEMBERS WAS THAT DISPUTE COULD NOT BE RESOLVED UNLESS UK WITHDREW WARSHIPS. NO INDIVIDUAL POSITIONS WERE MENTIONED. TOMASSON WAS

ALSO QUOTED BY REUTERS IN ARTICLE AS SAYING THAT GOI POSITION
TOWARD NATO WOULD BE REVIEWED IF UK DOES NOT CEASE TACTICS ON
FISHING GROUNDS.
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